DISCOVERY
OF
WHAT IS TRULY GOOD:
Held forth in
SERMON
PREACHED
At *Pauls*, Febr. 22. 1647.
Before the Right Honourable, the Lord Maior, and Aldermen, of the City of *LONDON*.

By *John Wells*, B. D.
Late Fellow of Queens Colledge in *Cambridge*, and Preacher of the Word (at present) at *Christ-Church*, *London*.

[illegible]

LONDON:
Printed by *J. Streater*, for *William Wells*, living at the Sign of the *Crown's Arms* in *Little-Brittain*, MDCLVIII.

Chiverton, Maior.

IT is Ordered, That Mr. *Wells* of *Christ-Church* be from this Court desired to Print his late Sermon at *Paul's*, With what remained to be delivered at that time.

CARLET.

Thursday the 25. of *Febr.*
1657.

TO

The Right Honourable,

Sir Richard Chiverton,

LORD MAIOR.

AND,

To the Right Worshipfull, the ALDERMEN of the famous City of LONDON.

Right Honourable,

THis Late Discourse, which adventur'd so publick an Ear by your Command, had the happinesse to meet with a kind acceptance, and a fair entertainment in your truly ingenuous and noble heart. Which when I quickly understood by your Lordships discourse upon the subject, I soon found the reason of it; not from any reall worth in the Sermon, but because those masculine and generous truths, Justice, Mercy, and true goodnesse and holinesse, contained in it, met with suitable Species imprinted upon your Soul. I easily saw, that you bare the very Image of my Text, and carried the Counter-pane of my Sermon in your Heart and Life.

And I have very great Reason to believe the same of you, [Right Worshipfull,] *And that your true Love to* Righteousness *and* holiness, *induced you to call for a publick view of what before was presented to your* Ear.

And truly, in this case I should my self Contradict my Text, *and* Do unjustly, *if I should not obey. I must confesse, it will appear with greater disadvantage in the* Presse, *then in the* Pulpit; *The* Eye *is more Critical than the* Ear, *it hath more time to examine, and judge; neither hath it so much reason to be satisfied with* seeing, *as the Ear, by the Advantage of a delivery, may be affected with* hearing.

But as to that, I am well enough at rest in my mind; my design is to send this Discourse beyond either Eye, *or* Ear, *viz. into your* Hearts, *and Lodge it there. And I hope, if you please to make* Reason *and* Piety *the Judges, I shall not need to fear too rigid a Censure of that, which is at least an Essay to the vindication of both. For my own part, I heartily intend to serve an interest, not of my own* reputation, *but of* Religion, *and would fain perswade the minds of all men, That it is a sober, rational, and intelligible business, a powerful, Energeticall, active thing in mens Wills and Affections. A design of Grace and Salvation* within us, *as well as Grace and Salvation* without us; *That while we* admire *the one, we may endeavour to* Advance *the other: That while we believe, and trust,*
Ephes. 2. 7. *and hope and rejoyce in the* exceeding riches *of free Grace, we may act, and live as those who are* indued with power from above, *and inobled with high and excellent Principles, worthy of our* heaven-born Souls, *of an* heaven-born Religion; *worthy of that glorious* Spirit *in the Gospel, and of him who is the* infinite *and* eternal Fountain *of all that admirable grace, and goodnesse, which I have here desired to magnifie, and exalt in all your hearts. The truth is, in plain terms, The whole intention of this Discourse, is, to make us Christians in good Earnest; To set* Religion *before you in its native, simple, pure, and beautiful* attire; *To display the true, and really worthy* life *of* men, *of Christians, and what it is indeed to live the*

life

life of God, *To make a deep impression of that rare Gospel-truth*, The Grace of God that bringeth salvation, hath appear'd to all men; Teaching us that denying ungodliness, and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godlily in this present World. Looking for the blessed hope, &c. Titus 2. 11. 12.

You will find in this small Tract *some* variety *of truths, and those which are substantial, and necessary, shortly discussed, under those two heads of Righteousness, and Holiness.* Righteousness waits *upon* Holiness, *and* Holiness Commands Righteousness. Righteousness *in my Text ushers in* holiness; *and it is indeed the* phosphorus ante diem. *The day-star before the Sun-rising; or methinks these two are like the two † fire-lights upon the Sea, which being seen together, presage your happiness; but parted asunder, threaten shipwrack of all your true hopes and felicities.* † Cast. Poll.

I shall say this, that I am confident never any Sermon can more truely design, and serve your proper interest, then this hath indeavoured to do; you are blest with the Government of a large, and a flourishing City; The Epitome of England; *So that some have asked whether* London *be in* England, *or* England *in* London. *And truely the onely way to make you yet more flourishing and glorious, it is to promote these great things of my* Text.

A Spanish Chorographer, *above all other Cities, commended* Barcina; Where was none bad, *and* none poor, Every one very good, *and* very rich, they lived Holily, *and* with the greatest veneration serv'd their god, *and* pursued the sacred things of Religion. *This I am sure, that the way for you to be rich indeed, is to be rich in* good works, *To* abound *in* righteousnesse *and* Holinesse. Cyp. Echov. Nemo malus, nemo pauper; optimus quisq; ac ditissimus, piè, sanctéq; vivebant; summa cum veneratione, et timore divino, cultui, sacrisq; rebus incumbebant.

The onely way to make your selves great, *is to let God and Religion be* great *in your* thoughts *and* Hearts; *this will make you great in* reality, *whereas all your riches and honours without this, will but make you* Seem *so, and appear* Agrippa-like, μετὰ πολλῆς φαντασίας, *with* great pomp, *we read it; but it is*, with great fancy.

Well,

† Unum id bonum, quo melior animus efficitur. Sen. Ep.

* τὴν ἀρχὴν μὴ εἰς ὕβριν, ἀλλ' εἰς ἐνεργεσίαν κατατίθεσθαι. Arist. in Epist. ad Alex.

well, I have here shew'd you what is good, *and what will make* you Good; *Good* Absolutely, *Good* Relatively, *Good* Men, *Good* Governours, *Good in your* Spirits, *and good in your* places, *Good, and* doing *Good, with your riches, with your power, with all your Talents; Do but close with this speciall truth, and then it shall never be true of you, as of the Moon, (to which, most rich men in this case may be compared) when she* is fullest of light, she is furthest from the Sun; *The more of wealth and honour, the further from God and true goodnesse. No, your ingagements, I hope, will carry you* to God, *not* from God; *make you to act for him,* and walk with him; Ye are gods, *therefore act like* God. *Live* publickly, *do* worthily. *Your Estates and Honours will* prove *but heart-flattering, Soul-deceiving vanities, unless you* improve *them to high and noble advantages.* Do justly, Love mercy, Walk holily, *and then these will be as Ships to carry you to the Haven of rest and happiness; and when you are arrived there, then every one may say,*

Prudent. * Inveni portum: spes et fortuna, valete.

I shall onely add this, that if I have seem'd to presse, too hard and long, these vertues *in my Text; Consider that these are singular vertues, and more rarely found, then we make account of in the world. It was a tart piece of wit which I remember in* Aristophanes. *When* Chremylus *advised blind* Plutus, *if he would recover his sight, to go to those who are just and righteous, he cryes out,* πανὶ μὲν ἂν πολλῇ γὰρ αὐτὸς οὐκ ἑώρακα χρόνῳ, *he had not seen any such a great while.* Chremylus *answered,* καὶ θαῦμ' οὐδὲν, οὐκ ἐγὼ γὰρ ὁ βλέπων. *No wonder, though one that is blind cannot see such, whereas I that have mine eyes cannot do that. But blessed be God, amongst those few which are in the world, our Eyes do see* Just *and* Righteous men *set in the high places of the City; And you being such, I hope you will candidly receive what is here offered to you, it being singly to promote such great Ends and purposes. What is further, is onely to beg your pardon, that it*

hath

hath no sooner obeyed your command; The truth is, the sharp afflicting hand *of providence, partly upon my self, but chiefly threatning my nearest relation, hath with-held my* hand *from offering this sooner; And now it is come, That it may be blest to you, and the whole City blest by you, is the hearty prayer of*

Your most humble servant in the work of Christ,

Joh. Wells.

The

The Epistle Dedicatory.

Yours most humble Servant in the
work of Christ,

Joh. Wells.

The

The Heavenly Vision.

OR,

A Discovery of what is truly Good.

Micah 6. 8.

He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?

WE are come this day to the Mountain of the Lord, (to use the Prophet's phrase) and in this Mount, like *Moses* upon the top of *Pisgah*, are we presented with a goodly prospect, though not of the Holy Land, yet of the best way to it; a sight, though not of glory, yet of goodness, *He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good.* We shall onely cast a glance upon the two former verses, the Text depending upon them. *Isa.* 2. 3.

Vers. 6. *Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow my self before the high God, &c?* The great *Jehovah* calls upon the Mountains and the hills. v. 2. *Citantur hic montes ut rei; & quod in montibus erecta essent Idola.* These are charged of guilt, because of the Idols erected in them; or, *the Mountains*, that is, *homines supremæ dignitatis*, if we may Allegorize upon the words. These he pleads with, and declares his controversie against. And now they being sensible of Gods displeasure, *The foundation of these hills are moved, they are shaken because he was wroth.* *Psal.* 18.

In a word, God having *touched these Mountains, they begin to smoak*, (to use still the *Prophet's* language) they seem hot with desire, to appease his anger, and to be reconciled to him; And therefore is this sollicitous Quære, *wherewith shall I come before the Lord?* They are willing to come

now, and to bring their cost with them too; *Shall I come before the Lord with burnt-offerings, with Calves of a year old?* *Sacrifices* large and big enough; they will be as bountiful as God will have them, spare for no expence; they are content to load his *Altars* with *sacrifices*, as they had loaded him with their *Sins*: if *thousands of rams*, or *ten thousand rivers of oyl*, will please him, he shall have all this; nay, rather then fail, they will give their *first-born for their transgression, the fruit of their body, for the sin of their soul.* It is true, in *this sense*, they will part with the one, that they may keep the other; part with their *children*, to keep the *bratts of sin*; *sacrifice* their *bowels*, so they might but spare their *lusts*: let them but keep their *substantial sins*, and God shall want for no *ceremonious services*; let them but have their covetousness, injustice, and oppression, and they will make God amends with what outward duty he pleases; give any thing, *modò nè ipsi se addicant*, so they may not give themselves; though indeed this is the *sacrifice wherewith God onely is well pleased*: all other is but πυρὸς τροφὴ, in the *Pythagorean* expression, the food of fire; this is θεῖ τροφὴ, *meat for God*, such a sacrifice which he *delights* in; viz. full of *righteousness*, *mercy*, and true *goodness*. *He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good, to do justly, love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God.*

In the words, here is, First, A *Divine Discovery*; And the *Author* of it, *God* himself; *He hath shewed thee.* 2. To whom this is made, it is to *Man*; *He hath shewed thee, O man.* 3. The matter of this *Discovery*, set out in three most significant expressions. 1. *To do justly.* 2. *To love mercy.* 3. *To walk humbly with God.* *Tria sunt omnia*, is more true here, then in the *Philosopher's* sense; these three are all: here is Religion and Divinity epitomized in these, *To do justly, to love mercy, to walk humbly with God.* Methinks in the Text we see God, as once in Mount *Sinai*, revealing the whole duty of Man, which the Jews call the *ten*-words, in these *three*. We may resolve them into two, *Righteousnesse*,

teousnesse, and *Gospel-holiness*; and then they are like *Jacob's Ladder*, which hath its foot on Earth, and its top in *Heaven*. But we will close with the words, and begin with the first expression, *He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good.* And here are couch't the great and main Principles, which we must walk by, live by, die by: *Reason*, and *Scripture*.

He hath shewed thee.

1. *Lumine Rationis.*
2. *Lumine Revelationis.*

First by the beams of *Reason* and Intellectual light, created in and with the Soul. And so the expression speaks to man, as man. *He hath shewed thee, O man.* And then the first Proposition or Observation shall be this,

That they are and must be counted high concernments, and matters of Religion, wherein God doth properly and chiefly speak to the Reasons and Understandings of men, as men. To tell you what I mean, *To do justly*, and *love mercy*, &c. as my *Text* speaks, these are acts of *Morality* and right *Reason*; And these are such, as are true Ingredients into, and high Concernments in, *Religion*. 1. *Obs.*

Certainly, did men but converse with themselves, and understand those *noble, intelligent, essences* which God hath created them with, those heavenly lineaments (as I may say) drawn upon them, those Divine resemblances sparkling upon their Souls; did they consider how they are *born for God*, and to act *like God*, that is, *justly*, and *righteously*, and upon worthy and generous *Principles*, for high and brave *Ends and Purposes*; did men but really consider this, they would certainly charge themselves with higher notions of these things, then they ordinarily do. *Whatever true light I find in my Soul, I am sure it is the light of God, Lumen naturæ, est lumen Dei.* And whatever beams I find spreading themselves upon me, I am sure they are communications of a divine, and eternal Sun, and I am made by these more partaker of divinity; and sure it must needs be an high piece of Religion, to act in Conformity to this divine light,

Sequi rationem, est sequi Deum, to follow and observe the *impressions of Reason*, is truly to *follow God*.

And now I will tell you, why I lay down this notion; Because I find these high and generous principles, and acts of piety, and Religion, (for so I call them) *Justice*, and *Mercy*, &c. but little regarded by some upon that account; Not so much as bound up in the Sustem of their Divinity, or admitted at all into their *Gospell* Creed. Or, if a little minded, yet lookt upon as Circumstantialls, like the Tithe of *Mint* and *Cummin*, and no wayes worthy of a true Christian and *Gospel*-spirit. This is certain, To tell men, that Religion is a sober, rationall, intelligible businesse, a powerfull, energetical thing; a design of duties of *Justice*, and *Mercy*, &c. it is enough to incurr from some, the censure of a Legalist, and Moralist, and little better then a Pagan Christian, an undervaluer of Grace, and Priviledge, and what not. I cannot but stand amazed sometimes, to see what strange Arts and Devices some men have, to make themselves believe, they are more then ordinary good, and spirituall, wrapt up in high forms of Religion, while in the mean time, they stick not to make a divorce between this, which they call *Morality*, and *Religion*; and violate the very known principles of *Reason* and *Nature*; And when I speak of such Arts and Devices, it is to be observed, that *Justice* and *Mercy*, are so naturall, and are such clear impressions upon mens minds, that they are fain to devise shifts to deceive their Consciences. Just like that *Jew*, who refusing to take ship at *Alexandria*, to go to *Palestine* on the Sabbath day, to deceive his Conscience, he hired a Janizary to bear him into the Ship, and, they say, he did it to purpose. I shall onely say thus much, let men take heed of such Arts and Devices: ye would think him a very daring man, who should take a pen on purpose to blot out all those Characters in the sacred *volumes* of the *Book of God*. Would ye not abhor such a man? And let me tell you, It

is

is little leſſe boldneſſe in any, who ſhall dare to blur, and utterly blot out, (if it was poſſible) thoſe impreſſions of *Divinity* which are upon his *Soul*, who dare offer ſuch violence to *God*, in his own Being. And that we may not ſpeak onely in generall; I ſhall inſtance in two ſorts of men.

The Jews, in my *Text*, if we do but look into this place, and into many more, ſcattered every where almoſt in the Bible, we ſhall find that they had high conceits of their Religion, and prided themſelves exceedingly in it; and they made account by *Faſting*, and *Praying*, and *Sacrificing*, they did moſt zealouſly ſerve all the ends of it: in the mean time their hands and hearts were full of *Cruelty*, *Injuſtice*, *Oppreſſion*, *Unmercifullneſſe*, *Covetouſneſſe*, and *Rapine*. They came, and ſat before God, as if they delighted in him, and they had been his very darlings; in the mean time, *their hearts ran after their Covetouſneſſe. They ſold the Righteous for Silver, and the poor for a pair of ſhooes.* And how God hated and abominated their ſervices, and all their Religion, upon this account, ye ſee all along. Ezek. 33. 31, 32. Amos 2. 6.

Another ſort are our *Speculative* Chriſtians, the *Gnoſtics* of our time, who place ſo much of Religion and ſpirituality, in *forms* and *notions*, and *high attainments*, that in the mean time, *Righteouſneſſe*, and *Juſtice*, and *Mercy*, paſſe for low, and mean things, and ſuch as may be eaſily diſpenc't with; they make account, that the ſpirit of the Goſpell is above the Notice of Morall obliquities. And ye know how plainly ſome tell us, that we are ſufficiently freed from the *Law* of God, by being made partakers of the *Grace* of the *Goſpell*. I ſhould not ſpeak one word to this, but onely to inculcate this notion, which I am now about, of what high concernment in Religion thoſe things are, which I am ſpeaking to. And therefore let me lay down theſe four particulars, briefly.

That divine Law which commands Juſtice, and Mercy, &c. *it is that which is created with, and in the Soul.* It is a ſtanding,

ding and an *eternal* rule, which God hath set up; and certainly we are highly obliged, as *Christians* unto this. Or else when I become a *Christian*, I must cease to be a *rationall Creature*, I must *unman* my self, and uncloath my Soul of that certain light and reason, which commands me both to *love God*, and to *do Justice*, and *Righteousnesse*.

2. *Similitude to God and his divine goodnesse is certainly a high piece of Religion*; and sure I am, the more there is of this *love of Justice and Mercy*, the more are we *like to God*, Who is *Love*, and who loves himself, whose essence is *Righteousnesse*, *Justice*, *Mercy*, and true *Goodnesse*. It is an high expression which our *Saviour* himself useth, that such things as these make us partakers of the *perfection* of God himself in the fifth of *Matth.* speaking there of love one to another (which takes in Justice and Mercy) and this love especially, if advanc'd to enemies, *vers.* 48. *Be ye perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect.*

3. *These duties are of such high concernment, that they are immutable impressions upon the Soul, perpetually binding, and indispensable.*

It must needs be so, they are such things as have an intrinsecall, and essentiall goodnesse in them; they are good in their own nature; Many other things are not so, which yet are high duties of Religion, they are good because *God commands them* (as to worship him in this or that way, &c.) but these God commands because they are *essentially good in themselves*. And so *good* that we need not fear to say, that God himself cannot dispense with them; It is impossible, while I continue a *rationall Creature*, and a *Christian*, upon any account, to be dispens'd with, or disobliged from *loving* my God, and from *Justice*, and *righteousness to others*.

4. *These laws and principles of reason, are not contrary, but altogether subservient, to the principle and law of Faith.* Gospel-truths do never cross either *natural* or *Moral* truth. Reason

son is subordinate to *Grace*, and Grace *perfects* Reason, *Hagar* is not to be cast out, if she will be subservient. We have the spirit of God. This is no Argument, therefore no matter for any other Law or rule. Indeed the Spirit is not to be called a *rule*, neither is it so, but it doth *inlighten, quicken, enable*, us to walk according to the *rule*. I might say much more to this, but must not stay. We have done with the first particular from that expression; *He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good. Lumine rationis*, by the light of Reason and Nature. And whatever we do let us take heed of sinning against this light, this discovery of God within us. It is a sad place, *Rom.* 1. 21. *because that when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, &c. vers.* 24. *wherefore God gave them up to uncleanness.* ver. 26. *For this cause God gave them up to vile affections.* Consider this, *O Man. Et, si non potes Cognoscere Deum quid sit in se, Cognosce interim quid sit in te*, look within, and if thou canst not know God, what he is in himself, see what he is in thy self: but yet there is a larger sight to be had of God, and therefore we shall consider the expression again. *Greg.*

2. *He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good,*

Lumine Revelationis. And now we are got to the top of the Mount, where we may have a full view of this excellency and goodness in my Text. *To the Law. And to the Testimony*, they will tell us what *God requireth of us.* And here before we speak particularly to the *Requisitum* in the Text, we shall consider a little, the nature of this discovery, under this second Proposition,

That our Religion is in it self a plain, a certain, and an infallible thing. It hath a certain *Foundation*, it hath a certain infallible *Rule*, a certain *Warrant* for it. *He hath shewed thee*, from the *Law*, and from the *Prophets*; *what is good.* 2. *Pet.* 1. 19. *We have a more sure Word of Prophesie, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, &c.*

Three

Three things here.

1. *Christians need be no Scepticks, or bare Seekers in Religion.* God hath sufficiently revealed his will; *He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good.* He hath abundantly discover'd what *righteousness* and *holiness* is too, he hath display'd the *beauty* of both; the characters of *grace* and *righteousness*, and whatsoever God requires, are so clear and plain, that there wants nothing, but an open eye to read them. And sure I am, a divine Spirit is ready to open our eyes too. Indeed the *Scripture* it is a vast depth, an ocean of profound mysteries: but here is our advantage, that either God will let us into them by the hand of his Eternal Spirit, and make us to understand (as he doth perhaps some of his *Saints*) the *heighth*, the *breadth*, the *depth* of his divine truth, or at least lead us into a certain knowledg, of the most *substantial*, and *necessary* truths. He hath given us a clear *glasse* to behold them. He hath told what he doth necessarily *require*, to *do justly*, to *love mercy*, to *walk humbly*. And then besides, there is an *unction from above*, which doth infallibly convince, and teach the Soul, and set it down more certainly, then all the arguments in the World can do. (how that is soberly to be understood, we shall consider in the next particular). There are many *notions*, which can onely be made out by Arguments, and probable Conclusions; and should Christians entertain all divine truths onely upon such grounds, they would indeed be at great uncertainties; A strong *head*, or a subtile *Sophister*, would easily overturn all their *faith*: but a good man, by vertue of those inward impressions of divine grace and goodness, & those clear and indubitable discoveries of God by his Spirit, in the Scripture, are perfectly secured as to the main truths of God, & salvation; and hence it is that they do entertain them with admirable delight, viewing their *beauty*, and feeding upon the inward *sweetness* of them.

1 John 1. 27.

Now considering this, And that, yet, those who call themselves *Christians*, should live at random, and be as such

such uncertainties, (as I know many thousands are) is such an unaccountable thing, as I know not what to make of it. That any who are trained up in the *Academy* of Christ, should be like those *Academicks* of old, who had this for their Motto, ἀκαταλαμβάνω, that is, I cannot *comprehend*, or I cannot reach any thing of truth. Let me tell such men, who do indeed but play with truth, and dally in Religion, while they say they cannot reach any thing certainly, That the *truths* of God will certainly at last *reach* them. It is a remarkable place, *John* 12. 46. *I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me, should not abide in darkness.* ver. 48. *He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.* Certainly, if this one Scripture did but sink into mens hearts, it would do infinite good in this Case.

2. *Christians need be no Enthusiasts in Religion.* No need of, or reason to expect, any further revelation from God, besides this in the Scripture. *He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good.* We have a word of *Prophesie*, and it is a *sure word*, as the Apostle speaks in that forementioned place. For,

1. The Apostle prefers this, above that voice from Heaven, at the *Transfiguration*; and yet that was sure, in the 17 and 18 verses. 2 Pet. 1. 19.

2. The Apostle prefers this above any Revelation made by Angels. *Though we or an Angel from Heaven, preach any other Gospel unto you, then that ye have received, let him be accursed.* Gal. 1.

3. Christ himself prefers the certainty of *Moses* and the *Prophets*, above the testimony of one who *should rise from the dead*. *And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be perswaded, though one rise from the dead.* God hath by this *sure* Word *shew'd thee, O man, what is good.* Luke 16. 31.

But because of the obscurity and difficulty of Scripture, (which I touch't upon before) and that we ordinarily take

in the revelation of Gods mind to us by his Spirit, 1 *Cor.* 2. 10. *But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit.* I must necessarily shew, what this revelation of the *Spirit* is, and how it may be freed from *Enthusiasm*, or an extraordinary *revelation* distinct from the Word. Very briefly.

This is certain, that the *Spirit in and with the word doth discover* and make manifest the *Divine truths of God.* The Word is *vehiculum Spiritus.* It is that Chariot, wherein the *Spirit* comes riding into the Souls of men; and therefore the Gospel is call'd the *ministration of the Spirit*; it brings the Spirit with it to reveal the great mysteries of the Gospel. Great Embassadours use to bring their Interpreters with them. I am sure the Gospel it is the blessed Embassage from Heaven, and the Spirit, in the Word, (not without the Word) is the great Interpreter. This is the *anointing*, to which the highest and most accomplisht understandings must give heed to. *Where is the wise? where is the disputer?* Think not to bring all divine *mysteries* to be discern'd, or judged solely at the Tribunal of the greatest Reason and Natural understanding in the world. *They are the deep things of God, and they are spiritually discerned.*

2 Cor. 3.

1 Cor. 2. 14.

Tell the wisest, natural, carnal man in the world of these great things of the Gospel, *Self-denyal, self-resignation* unto God, *cutting off the right hand, plucking out the right eye, regenerration, renovation* of the whole soul, a constant *dependance* upon the *grace* of Jesus Christ, living by *faith* in Jesus Christ living in the *heart*, which are the great *practicall* mysteries of the Gospel: And it is as much, as if we should think, to make a man to understand the excellency of Musick, the admirable pleasures of such and such a tune, the delicate sweetness of such a note, only by telling him a story in words. Alas, this will not do it; it must be by bringing the man to the Consort, entertaining him with the pleasant noise, and imprinting those musicall delights upon his Spirit. And so it is in this case: (and how ye shall see, that I am speaking of a sober and intelligible Revelation,

Revelation of divine truth by the Spirit of God, and no wild Enthusiasm;) When the Spirit is said to teach us, and to discover to us the divine mysteries of truth, it is by *inlightning* the soul more, and *enlivening* the Soul, and by *transforming* the Soul into the Image of divine truth. Here is the excellency of a Christian, he hath not onely the Word without him, but transcribed in him; he can say, *Thy Law, O Lord, is within my heart.* As a great Scholler is said to be a *walking Library*; he hath concocted what he hath received, and made all notions his own, which he hath met with. And so it is with a good man, his Bible is transmitted into his Soul; ye shall find a copy within, as well as without; And this written by a *Divine Spirit*. And this is the true way of the *Spirits* teaching. Much more might be said, but I must pass it by at present, though indeed I have spent some serious thoughts of this, upon occasion of the *Spirit's Revelations*, which so many pretend to, and likewise considered how the Spirit's testimony, which is ordinarily own'd as the greatest argument for the divinity and truth of the Scripture, may be understood without *Enthusiasm*, or extraordinary Revelation; which the Papists fix upon us: And one thing more too, how the testimony of the *Spirit* in reference to the *certainty of salvation*, and filling us with inward peace, and joy: (Say unto my Soul, That thou art my God, and my salvation) how this may be soberly understood, without running upon the same rock; but these thoughts would make a large Treatise, and are not to be bounded in a Sermon. To close this:

O the incomparable Love and goodness of God to us, he hath given us the most admirable security for our Religion in the world: here is that whereupon we may cast our Souls to all Eternity. I should be loath to do this upon any strong impulse or new Revelation whatsoever. And here I would have laid down some particulars; how Satan doth deceive unstable souls ordinarily in his imitation

of God, by way of *Revelation*, and by way of *motions* and *impressions* upon the Soul; And by working up the spirits to *high raviſhments*, *peace*, and great *joyes*. But I muſt not lengthen too much. This ſhort *hortation* ſhall conclude this Particular:

Chriſtians! admire God who hath certainly *ſhewed us what is good*; he hath given us a Goſpel-light, which out-ſhines all the *Viſions* of the *Patriarchs*, and *Prophets*; their *Viſions* were but *obſcurities*; their *Revelations*, *Concealments* unto this.

And then let us highly value this diſpenſation from Heaven; here is the patent, and the *Charter* of a Chriſtian, all that he hath to ſhew for his happineſſe: Here (Chriſtians) are your Deeds, and conveyances, of the holy Land. Here is your treaſure, your wealth, your priviledges, all that you have to boaſt of, eſpecially as to another life; Here is the *Glaſs*, nay here is the *face*, wherein you may behold Chriſt; the Goſpel it is the *face* of Chriſt. This ſhews you all Chriſt, and brings in all of Chriſt, his light, and Grace, not in *Dewes*, but *ſhowres*; his glorious *wiſedome*, his glorious *Goodneſs*, his glorious *Kingdome*, his *all*, I am ſure *He hath ſhewed thee here what is good*. One particular more to this expreſſion.

3. *Then turn not Religion into Quæries and vain Speculations*. This indeed is no better then a *barren and unfruitful knowledge of Jeſus Chriſt*, as the *Apoſtle* ſpeaketh, *Say not in thine heart, who ſhall aſcend up into heaven? but the Word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart*. He hath clearly diſcovered *what is good*. And *unto man he ſaid, Behold, The fear of the Lord, that is wiſdom*.

2 Pet. 1. 8. Rom. 10. 6, 8. Job 28. 28.

The Word is *nigh*, and your Religion is plain and eaſily to be known: *The fear of the Lord that is wiſdome*. It is a ſad thing when it comes to this, that *Religion* ſhall be turn'd into nothing but *ſpeculative* fancies and *diſputes*, and thoſe very poor ones too; Like thoſe trifling diſputes in *Holland*, which I have ſome where read of, where two great

Non eſt volandum ſupra Nubes, non eſt ingrediendum in Abyſſum.

great Clerks kept a mighty stir, whether *Aaron's Ephod* was of *Sea-green*, or *sky-coloured*; and this disturbed the *Assembly*, and there were Abettors on both sides. I could wish, that much of our Religion did not run out into as thin and poor disputes. I could name some, but I forbear.

Religion hath been, and certainly is, in it self, a lively, vigorous, operative thing; the good *Martyr* could say, *I cannot dispute for Christ, but I can dye for Christ, and for Religion.* But men now adays, will neither *dye* for him, nor *live* for him, but they will talk and dispute for him, and for Religion, at least about them, as long as you please. *Some are of Paul, and some are of Apollo.* Which makes me think it was a better Age, when all were divided but into two sects, εὐσεβεῖς καὶ ἀσεβεῖς, into good men, and bad men: Then impiety and injustice, and unrighteousnesse, were counted the greatest heresies of the world. But I shall now dismiss this first expression; *He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good.*

I have already taken in the other expressions in general, but I must now speak particularly to them. I shall not stand to give descriptions of *Justice*, and *Mercy*, ye know what they are, what *Justitia Commutativa*, and *Distributiva* is; What it is to be *just* in your private *Commerces*, And to be *just* in your publick *Gubernations*. I shall onely shew the excellencies, and priviledges of both, and so endeavour to promove them in your minds and practises.

And because there is so much of *Justice*, in shewing *Mercy*, and that cannot be true and genuine *mercy*, which appears without *justice*, (they are indeed twins in the same womb, and are born together, and the one saith to the other, like *Ruth* to *Naomi*, *Where thou goest, I will go; where thou lodgest, I will lodge*); they can hardly be separated. I shall therefore speak to both together; but yet first a little consider each distinctly, lest I should be accounted either *unjust* or *unmercifull*, in the neglect of a distinct plea.

And first, *Do justly*. What a goodly vertue *Justice* is, the *Philosopher* shall first tell you, οὐθέσπερος οὐθ ἑῷος οὕτω θαύμαστος, Neither *Aristot. Eth.*

ther the evening nor the morning-Star is half so bright and admirable: nay, it seems it is like the Sun it self, and so resplendent and excellent, that Jesus Christ himself is styled, *Sol justitiæ*, the Sun of righteousness or *justice*.

And when *Solomon* came to give an Encomium of Christ, in the 45 *Psalm*, see how he expresseth it, ver. 6. *Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; the Scepter of thy Kingdom is a right Scepter. Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickednesse; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee, with the oyl of gladness above thy fellows.* And if *Aristotle* may be heard again after *Solomon*. This *Justice* and *righteousness* it is so excellent, that he tells us, it is ὅλη ἀρετὴ, ἀλλ' ὅλη ἀρετὴ, not part of vertue, but all *vertue*; and the Contrary is not part of vice, ἀλλ' ὅλη κακία, all *vice*. So great a thing is *Justice*. And, is not *Mercy* as fair and lovely too? yes sure. I remember *Cicero* in his praise of *Cæsar*, where he doth magnificently display his glory, and set out his excellencies and vertues; yet there he saith, *Nulla de virtutibus tuis nec admirabilior, nec gratior misericordiâ est.* Amongst all his vertues he had none more admirable or more amiable then his *mercy*, and *compassion*. But would we speak higher of this pretious vertue, of *mercy*; it was admirable in *Cæsar*, but it is most resplendent and illustrious in *God* himself. There is not a *Jewel* in the crown of God so bright and shining, as this of *Mercy*.

Seneca. It is the true and proper issue of infinite *goodness*, *Et sine bonitate nulla majestas*; Without *goodnesse* there can be no *majesty*, nor *glory*. That most excellent Scripture shall conclude this, *Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdome, &c. But let him that glorieth, glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord, which exercise loving kindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth; for in these things do I delight, saith the Lord.*

Jer. 9. 23, 24.

Application. And now give me leave to speak a few things to you,

1. As you are *Men*, *Citizens*, and *Christians*.

2. As ye are (many of you) in a more *publick* capacity, *Magistrates* and *Governours*.

1. As

3. As *Men, Christians*, &c. Let *Justice* and *Mercy* be written in *Capital* Letters, in all your hearts, and let this be every one of your *Motto's*, *Do justly, love mercy*. Let this be as a *seal upon your heart*, as a *seal upon your right arm*. Then shall this great City be called, *The City of righteousnesse, a faithful City*. Ye can never consult so well for your *Interest* and advantage, as by this. There are the strongest Arguments for it in the world. It is *good*, and good for you. Cant. 8. 6.

1. *Justice* and *Mercy*, will certainly be the best *foundation* of your *Riches* and *Greatnesse*. As the *whirlwind passeth, so is the wicked no more; but the righteous is an everlasting foundation*. *Justice* is called *fundamentum virtutum*, the foundation-vertue. I am sure it is *fundamentum prosperitatis*: This is the *stone*, a *tryed stone*, a *foundation*, and a *sure foundation* (if I may allude to that expression in an higher sense); and truly he that buildeth the house of his greatnesse, upon injustice, fraud, and unmercifulness, he maketh a *vvo* his *foundation*, *vvo to him that buildeth a Town with blood, and establisheth a City by iniquity*. *vvo to him that coveteth an evil Covetousnesse, to his house, that he may set his nest on high*, &c. *Thou hast consulted shame to thy house. For the stone shall cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber shall answer it*. Surely *folly* and *madnesse* is his *Name*, who shall thus make *vvo* and *shame*, and *vengeance* his foundation of serrene happinesse and prosperity. Prov. 10. 25. Isa. 28. 16. Habbak. 2. v. 12, v. 9, 10, 11.

Justice and *Mercy* will prove the best and most *sure defence, bonum munimentum*, as well as *fundamentum*. *Justice* and *Mercy* will be the Tutelary Angels (as I may say) to your estates and possessions; or they will be as a *Tree of life* in your goodly paradise, which will perpetuate your enjoyments to you and yours. Can ye think enough of that most incomparably elegant and encouraging place, *He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly; he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes*, &c. *He shall dwell on high: his place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks, bread shall be given him, his waters* Isa. 33. 15, 16.

shall

shall be sure. A most emphatical strain of Rhetorick to perswade to *Justice* and *Mercy.*

3. *Justice* and *Mercy.* They will be your *blessing*, a blessing *here*; and if attended with grace and holiness, your blessing in *Eternity.* These two will make you, like *Bees*, in the evening returning from the fragrant fields, loaden
Psal. 5. 12. with sweet and pretious *blessings. For thou, Lord, wilt bless the righteous, with favour wilt thou compasse him as with a shield.* Such a man shall every way be blessed; his *head* full of
Prov. 10. 6. blessing. *Blessings are upon the head of the just:* And these
Psal. 133. 2. are like the *precious oyntment upon the head of Aaron, which ran down to the skirts of his garment.* His *name* shall be bles-
Prov. 10. 7. sed; *the memory of the just is blessed.* His *habitation* shall be
Prov. 3. 33. blessed: *But he blesseth the habitation of the just.* In short, all men shall be ready to use this speech, *The Lord blesse*
Jer. 31. 23. *thee, O habitation of justice, and mountain of holiness.* To add
Isa. 56. 1, 2. but one place more: *Thus saith the Lord, Keep ye judgment, and do justice; for my salvation is near to come, and my righteousness to be revealed. Blessed is the man that doth this, and the son of man that layeth hold upon it.*

But are there not as many blessings attending upon mer-
Matth. 5. 7. cy? Yes sure: *Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.* And that is observable which is said of St. *Hierom*, That he turn'd over Histories on purpose to search, *and he never found a merciful man, which did not meet with some signal blessing in this world.*

But that which speaks highest of all, is this, *That in the great day when the son of man shall come in his glory,* &c. *Then*
Matth. 25. 31, 34. *shall the King say to them on his right hand, Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you, from the foundation of the world.* Why so? Is it because they made high pretences to Religion, were much in some outward performances, had high and rais'd notions, &c. No, no,
Vers. 35. *For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was naked, and ye cloathed me.* What good have ye done? will certainly be the great question then,

then. *Si aperueris pauperibus manus tuas, Christus tibi aperiet Januas suas, & Paradisi possessor introcas.* Jesus Christ will open the gates of *Paradise* to those, who open the hands of *Mercy*. *He hath shewed thee what is good, to do justly, to love mercy.* This will be your blessing. And what curses attend the contrary, we shall have occasion to urge anon. *August.*

4. *Justice* and *Mercy* will be your *ornament and beauty*: These will prove the best *Jewels* among all your riches and treasures. *I put on righteousness,* (saith *Job*) *and it clothed me; my judgment was as a robe and a diadem.* And though this may be meant properly of publick Justice, yet this is most true, That men never adorn themselves so richly, as by putting on Justice in all their Commerces and undertakings. *Job 29. 14.*

5. *Justice* and *Mercy* will be your *Crown* and *Exaltation*, *By the blessing of the upright, the City is exalted. Righteousness exalteth a Nation.* And then for *Mercy*, that is a rare encouraging place, that of *David*; *He hath dispersed, he hath given to the poor, his righteousness endureth for ever, his horn shall be exalted with honour.* What shall I say, when a *crown of righteousness* is set upon the head of all our enjoyments, will not this be good indeed? What *Solomon* saith of *wisdom*, I am sure is true both of *Justice* and *Mercy*. *Exalt her, and she shall promote thee; she shall bring thee to honour, when thou dost embrace her. She shall give to thine head an ornament of grace, and a crown of glory shall she deliver to thee.* *Prov. 11. Prov. 14. 34. Psal. 112. 9. Prov. 4. 8, 9.*

Certainly, if men be friends either to God, or others, or themselves, and their immortal souls, they will *do justly*, and *love mercy*.

You see by this time, I come not hither to make a dry discourse of *Morality*; *Sed vestra res agitur*: but the business of your *Estates*, your *Lives*, your *Souls* depend upon it. And therefore I must not leave this Address to you, before I have added some few things more, which I hope will be more significant, and efficacious then all the rest; because it is to shew you some ready means, either to prevent, or

cure this Epidemical disease of *unrighteousness*, this *soul-undoing*, this *City-ruining*, *Nation-destroying* sin of *injustice*, and *unmercifulness*.

And first, in general.

Beware of those two great evils *signally* mark't out in Scripture, The *Love of the world*, And the *Pride of life*. *Ambition* and *Covetousness*: These are the very seeds of all unrighteousnesse, the root of all evil; other sins are more above; these run under-ground; they are inward, they enter into the very soul, lye at the bosome, work to *Hell*, *Flectere si nequeo superos, Acheronta movebo*, is the voice of Ambition and Covetousness. St. *Bernard* paints out the Chariots of these sins, to be drawn with *cruel*, *fierce*, and *desperate* horses; and these are, *injustice*, *violence*, *fraud*, and *unmercifulness*. And these must draw up-hill, to the mount of riches and honour.

The first of these two was the first-born of sin, (as I may call it) it infected the purest creatures; *Heaven* it self was not sufficient *preferment* for the *Angels*; nor *Paradise* good enough for *Adam*. The pure robes of *innocency*, were not cloathing glorious enough; but *Angels* and *Adam* must aspire higher, and nothing will satisfie them, *but to be as God*. Their spirits, acted by *pride* and *ambition*, were not able to brook an higher Majesty, then themselves; *Si parem, non superiorem*. And we see what came on it. Men acted by such a principle, what *unrighteousnesse* will they not commit? What made *Joseph's* brethren so unjust and cruel to him, but onely this, they were afraid of his *sheaf*. If *Joseph* do but dream he shall be greater then they, he shall feel their *cruelty*, *injustice* and *violence*: And how many instances have we of covetousnesse? *Jezabel*, as to *Naboth's* vineyard; The *Parable*, Matth. 21. *This is the heir*, &c. And that which is more sadly to be considered; This is that which will put men not onely upon *injustice* to others, but to *God* himself; it will make them offer violence to *Religion*, to *divine honour*, and what ever is *sacred* in the world;

all

all these shall be prostituted to serve the ends of pride and covetousnesse. *Jezabel* commands a Fast to be proclaimed, 1 *Kings* 21. 9. *Herod* commands to *search diligently for the child, that he may come and worship him*; he worships his *lust*, but would destroy the *child*. I make account, That man will stick at no abuse of God, whose *god* is his *gain*. How notorious was that of one of the *holy fathers* of *Rome*, a *Pope*, *O quantas divitias peperit hæc fabula Christi!* But I have stayd too long here: it is clear what is the ground of these great sins of *injustice* and *unmercifulnesse*. Let us strike at the very root. And these few serious Particulars shall conclude this first branch of the Exhortation. And let me beg this piece of *Justice* of every man (it is to your selves); That ye would *make a true and just account, of the gains and losses*, by *injustice and unmercifulnesse*.

1. Of the gains of *unrighteousnesse*, what they amount to. Truly, when a man hath gained the most he can in the world, and that well too, he doth but grasp a shadow, and hold a bubble in his hand, he possesseth *vanity*; in the midst of *fulnesse*, he findeth *emptinesse*; he feels a *swelling*, but not a *filling*. But now consider the gain of *unrighteousnesse*; What is it? It is the purchase of *iniquity*, a possession of *gall* and *misery*, it is a *poyson* tormenting the bowels, an inheritance of *Scorpions*, an heap of *Curses*, a *Treasure of wrath against the day of wrath*. And let men but seriously think what is got by all this. There are 3 or 4 places, which I would to God were fairly written in the *Account-Books* of all unrighteous, unmerciful men; and when they have seriously read them, I shall stand amaz'd, if they will so far lay aside their Reason and Understandings, the Interest of themselves, and of their posterities, as to heap up Riches by fraud, injustice, or deceit, and unmercifulnesse. Take that of the *Prophet Jeremy*, *As the Partridge sitteth on eggs, and hatcheth them not; so he that getteth riches, and not by right, shall leave them in the midst of his dayes, and at his end shall be a fool.* And that of *Job*, *He hath swallowed down*

Rom. 2. 4.

Jer. 17. 11.

Job 20. 15, 16.

down riches, and he shall vomit them up again; God shall cast them out of his belly. He shall suck the poyson of Asps: the vipers tongue shall slay him. Because he hath oppressed and forsaken the poor, because he hath violently taken away an house which he builded not; Surely he shall not feel quietnesse in his belly, he shall not save of that which he desired: In the fulness of his sufficiency he shall be in straits, &c. When he is about to fill his belly, God shall cast the fury of his wrath upon him, and shall rain it upon him while he is eating. But shall not their Posterity be the better? See one place more, *God layeth up his iniquity for his children.* Men lay up their *money* for their children, and God layeth up their *iniquity*.

Job 20. ver. 19, 20, 21, 22, 23.

Job 21. 19.

And me-thinks that of the Apostle *James* should pierce mens ears; *Go to, now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, &c. your gold and silver is cankered, and the rust of them shall be a witnesse against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire, ye have heaped treasure together for the last day.* You see the up shot of such gain.

Jam. 5. 1, 2, 3.

2. Take a just estimate of your losses too; An unrighteous man may get possession of riches and honour: but he loses the *fruition* of them; he may use them, but not enjoy them. Enjoyment speaks a sweet and orderly use of them, which is one of the Gospel-Promises; *He giveth us all things richly to enjoy.* But that which is worse, he loseth his *God*, the fountain of all. And he loseth his own *immortal Soul*. And what an unaccountable losse is this! *What will it profit a man to win the whole world, and lose his own soul?* *Drexelius* tells us a story of one *Theodore*, who began first to expostulate with himself, thus; O *Theodore*, *what will it profit*, &c? Thou hast many enjoyments, but wile thou venture thy soul for these transitories? then fell a weeping, and he down of his knees, and cryed out, Lord, I know not what to ask, onely deliver me from eternal death. And so he went on upon this Meditation, *what will it profit, &c?* But I shall leave this Consideration.

1. Tim. 6.

Matth. 16. 26.

2. Get

2. Get a ſtrong belief of this great Truth, *That there are better riches, more noble treaſures, to be injoyed, then what can be laid up here below.* Hence is our Saviour's moſt inſinuating exhortation; *But rather ſeek ye the Kingdom of God,* &c. *Fear not little flock, it is your fathers pleaſure to give you a Kingdome. Provide your ſelves bags which wax not old, a treaſure in the Heavens that faileth not,* &c. Be perſwaded to view an excellency in *Heavenlies* above *Earthlies.* And if ye cannot ſpy out the beauty and excellency that is in ſuch, your ſelves; believe thoſe that can; believe the *Spies,* who have ſeen the holy Land, and who give you a true *report of it.* Certainly, did men believe this, That there is ſomething better then this world; they would live otherwiſe: but I am afraid, that notwithſtanding all the bleſſed diſcoveries of the Goſpel, all that beauty, and excellency, and glory, which is diſplay'd there, the moſt of Chriſtians muſt be content at laſt to be reckon'd amongſt *Infidels* and *Unbelievers.* That is the ſecond, There are better and more noble treaſures above, then the beſt of Earthlies. And then, Luke 12. 31,32,33.

3. *That God hath inveſted you with Beeings ſuitable to thoſe high and noble enjoyments.* Ye have immortal ſpirits, capable of the moſt glorious endowments. And what pity is it, that they ſhould be condemned πρὸς τὸν τῦ χρυσοῦ μεταλλίαν, to a perpetual drudgery in the *golden Mineral,* as one elegantly expreſſeth it. It is ſad to think, how the moſt of men do make their ſouls truckle to every portion of gain and intereſt, and ſerve for nothing elſe but to become captives and ſlaves, to the carnal part, and the very ſcorn of every luſt and temptation. I have often thought, that there are thouſands in the World, who have no other Argument to prove that they have ſouls, but this; That they have Reaſon and Underſtanding to plot and contrive their carnal earthly intereſts, they have admirable skill in all the arts, methods, and policies of growing great and rich in the world: and ſuch a man we uſe to ſay is a very *under-*

ſtanding

standing man, or rather a very *understanding fool*. He *spends his dayes in vanity, and then goes down into the grave*. And so comes at last to understand his own misery, before he thought of the excellency of his Soul.

4. *Let much of Religion be spent upon your affections*; to moderate, mortifie, and subdue *them*. And surely this is the most compendious way to be truly rich, then a man enjoyes all things in the enjoyment of little. To bring down a man's *affections* to his *Condition*, is as much as to instate him in the riches of both the *Indies*. Such a one finds a Mine where ever he walks, a Store-house in his own breast. Every Cushion he sits upon is stuff'd with *peace*; And his pillow with *delight and sweetnesse*: he is the truest *Chymist*, he can extract gold out of every thing; he scorns to inrich himself by baseness, or unrighteousness, by neglect of God, Heaven, and Religion; he hath a far more easie, and an happier way.

5. *Get settled thoughts of Eternity*. And if any thing in the world can make men serious, sure this will; it is but a little while, and then these soft gliding streams of our outward enjoyments, must empty themselves into the vast Ocean of Eternity. Have we not heard? have we not understood the sighs and groans, the bitter pangs of many thousands, when they have been ready to enter into *Eternity*; when their riches, their pleasures, their honours come to take their last farewell, and bid good-night for ever; O then, that *there were a messenger one of a thousand*, What to do? *to shew unto such their uprightness?* Alas, that cannot be. *But to deliver from going down into the pit, and to say, he hath found a ransom*. Oh, saith every one of them, *That I might now dye the death of the righteous, And that my latter end might be like his*. But O what discouragement is this to a Minister, when he is forc'd to say, as the *Crab* to the *Serpent* in the Fable, when he had his mortal blow, and then stretcht himself outright, *At oportuit sic vixisse*, You should have lived so. *Mark the righteous man*, and *Behold*

Job 33. 23.

Psal. 37. 37.

the

the upright, for the end of that man is peace. To speak more closely. Ye are in an hot pursuit of the World. Do ye consider that *Eternity* waits upon you? do you think of casting up our Books in another World? do ye think of another Account then what ye make here. It is too hot a thought for most men; that of the *Apostle*; *we must all appear before the Judgement seat of Christ* &c. 2 Cor. 5. 10.

I can scarse believe that ever any man thought seriously of that place, who lives in a constant neglect of *Righteousnesse*, and *Mercy*, and true goodnesse. What a word is this? when I am getting any thing, doing any thing; to Consider, I must be *judged* according to this, either to endlesse *misery*, or eternall *rewards*. Speak soberly, Can ye believe, that actions which favor of nothing but earth, love of the world, if not the gain of unrighteousnesse, can hold out at the great day? Do ye think ye *can have boldness at the day of Judgment*? Shall I perswade you to compare the things of time with eternity? *And in this your day to consider the things which belong to your peace*; it will be sad at last when ye are going headlong into everlasting burnings, then to say, *Non putaram*, Lord I did not think this. I never considered what eternity was, and I made account I had time enough, *O Lord* spare me, for I did *not think* of it. Didst thou not think of it, saith God? I thought of it, my *Son* thought of it, when he died to purchase eternall life; the Ministers thought of it, and told thee of it every day; beseecht thee, pray'd, and wept over thee. *Go depart from me* into an eternity of misery. Did ye never read, saith God, that story of *Dives*; *Son remember*, &c. *Cavenat divites, unius sunt nominis, cavenat ne unius sint Conditionis*, Aug. Let rich men beware, they have the same name, take heed of the same condition. To say no more: Set before you the terrours of an affrighted Conscience in a dying man. O what sad apprehensions, what ghastly appearances of death, and devils? what calling to the Grave? what haling to judgment? what black bills charged Luk. 16. 25

charged upon him? what endirements ready drawn? Imagine this case and endeavour to prevent it, *begin to live betimes*, that ye may not dye *too soon*. So I have done with the first branch of the Exhortation.

2. To you in a more publick capacity, as *Magistrates* and *Governours*. Serve the great end of your *places*, and *relations*, then will ye be *just* to God, to *others*, to your *selves*, when with *righteousnesse* and *equity*, ye carry on publick good. And this is *Gualters* sense upon the *Text*. *Judicium facere*, saith he, is for men in their publick relations, to carry on publick designs.

Ministers of the Gospell *they do justly*, when they lay out themselves, and are exceeding intent upon that publick and glorious design of *salvation* of Souls.

Magistrates *they do justly*, when they make account, that God hath given them their power not to use and lay out for themselves, but for *publick* good, and act accordingly.

Let me a little presse this upon you.

Phil. 2. 4. 1. It is *your absolute duty*. *Let no man seek his own good, but the good of others*; here is a point of Justice and Mercy. *Look not every man on his own things, but every man also upon the things of others*; Especially Magistrates who are charged with others; And it follows, *Let the same mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus*. And surely that was a *publick* mind. Whose interest did Jesus Christ pursue? his own or yours? did he mind himself or others? And how doth the great God all along charge himself with the *publick*, and are not you his vice-gerents? *I have said, Ye are Gods*.

2. *It is your excellency and Glory*. A *publick* spirit for *Justice* and *Mercy*, is a most *noble*, and a most *ingenuous* spirit. A man indeed lives no longer, then while he lives to the publick. Another man in the *Apostle's* phrase, is *dead while he lives*. And therefore it spoke a *brave Spirit*, in that *Heathen*, who used to say, *Mallet se esse, quàm vivere, Mortuum*,

Curius Dentatus. Sen.

tuum; Et ultimum malorum est, ex vivorum numero exire antequam morianis, he had rather be dead, then live dead. And it is the worst of evills to go out from the living before thou dieſt: ſuch a one, he lives alwayes in his grave, *himſelf* is his own *Center*, all the lines of his life, and all the actions of his life, are drawn from, and meet again in himſelf.

3. It will be your *praiſe* and *reward* from God, when God ſhall, as *Ahaſhuerus* did, read over the Book of *Records*; for certainly a *Book of remembrance is written before him.* Then will he ſay, what *honour* and *dignity* hath been done to ſuch and ſuch men? they have acted worthily, they have honoured me, and now I muſt honour them; And *What ſhall be done unto the men whom the King of Kings delights to honor? Let the Royall apparell be brought which the King uſeth to wear, and the Crown royall which is ſet upon his head.* Eſth. 6. 1. Mal. 3. 16. Vers. 6, 8.

Who would not act worthily in publick relations for publick good? Let me urge this but in theſe two words more.

1. To be acted by a narrow and private ſpirit; *It is below the nature of Heaven-born Souls.* Theſe are as ſo many raies and immortall ſtreams, from that eternall *Juſtice* and divine *mercy*, whoſe proper nature it is to diffuſe and ſpread it ſelf abroad; and continually to communicate to his Creatures.

Ye ſhould be as ſo many great *luminaries*, caſting forth the *publick* influence of your *Juſtice* and *Mercy*; and indeed if you would truly live more to your ſelves, ye ſhould live more to the publick. *Alteri vivas oportet, ſi vis tibi vivere.* We know how little the Heathens valued themſelves and their lives, who could be contented to become *ſacrifices* for the publick ſafety; I ſhall onely ſay this, That it ſpeaks grand unworthineſſe for men to ſpend their dayes and years upon themſelves, and have no other Argument to prove, *ſe diù vixiſſe, præter ætatem*, that they have lived long, beſides their age. Such a man fruſtrates the very end of his *being*. Senec. Sen.

3. A narrow private spirit is far more below *the supernaturall Spirit of a Christian*; you are *Magistrates*, and Christian *Magistrates*. Gods great design upon you, is his own glory and publick good, and his glory *in* publick good. And it becomes the spirit of a Christian, to be wholly subservient to the honour of his God, and *to serve him in his Generation*. I have already told you what publick spirits the *Heathens* expressed, as *Men*.

And we cannot but stand and admire at the noble and high expressions, and examples of his Saints, in reference to the publick. They are wonderfull high instances. That of *Moses*. *Yet now if thou wilt forgive their Sin, and if not, blot me I pray thee out of thy Book which thou hast written.* Exod. 32. 32. And that of *Paul*, *For I could wish that my self were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh.* Rom. 9. 3. I must not stand now to give an account of these Heroick wishes. And what is meant by the *Book* which *Moses* speaks of; (surely not the *Book of eternall Life*: I cannot by all the distinctions which yet I have met with, reconcile that sense to my understanding) what if it be no more then *to be cut off from the people*, and from *this land of the living*? And *Pauls anathema, in sensu ecclesiastico*. But I shall leave this, only superadding that of *Augustin*; That it is said, he loved his people so well, as that he would often cry out, *Nolo salvus esse sine vobis, Nolo salvus esse sine vobis*, I will not be saved without you: which I think (if true) was as high an instance, as any of the former. There is one place more which I shall just name, which speaks an excellent and *publick* spirit, and it is of *Moses* too. *Now therefore, saith God, let me alone, that my wrath may wax against them, and that I may consume them, and I will make of thee a great Nation.* Vir. Aug. fr. Exod. 32. 10, 11, 12. God makes him, for his part, large offers; if *Moses* had moved within the orb of *self-love*, he would soon have been quiet, but see what Arguments he useth, *vers.* 11, 12. and all for the *publick*; his greatnesse was wrapt up in the *publick happinesse*. And this is a spirit worthy of a Christian.

Christian. Such a one is *major seipso*, he is bigger then himself; his thoughts are too high and great, to fix on any thing that may barely serve himself; he reckons his *ultimate* designs and affections, as too choise and precious to be spent upon any thing but God, and the Interest of God, in the world. I have said enough to you, who (I am confident) are truly *Christians*, and truly *publick*. But yet, if I had time, I would have drope into the wheels of your Souls, that little *oyl* which lies in my *Text*. And that is *Love*.

Love Mercy. This will be the *life* and *soul* of all your publick actings. *Thomas Aquinas* in his disputes upon such a subject, tells us, That it is the property of *love*, *Efficere ut in excercendis actionibus virtutum, voluntariè prompti, delectabiliter, et firmiter operemur*. He that is acted by Love, he moves *freely*, and *readily*; he is carried, as it were, upon Eagles wings, with admirable swiftnesse to the object beloved. And then *Delightfully* too. *Love*, it carries sweetnesse and delight in its own bosome, it is it self the *reward* of him that loves; it is of such an *Ingenuous* temper, that it puts a special delight upon all its undertakings.

And then it moves *strongly* too. *Love*, it is the nerves of the Soul, it is a principle which puts strength and vigour into all our actions. Certainly, unless we be carried by this Ingenuous principle in all our publick undertakings, we shall faint and tire, and sit down before we have attain'd the end: When our spirits grow flat and heavy, they may take a sweet repose, and refresh themselves, upon the pleasures and delights of that *Love* which acts them. Be sure then to get publick spirits, and these acted by *Love*. Let this be a Spring, to *feed*, *supply*, and *give perpetual life* to the streams of all your actions. But then it must not be *sinistrous self-love*, but Love to the *publick*; the one makes a man to live continually a slave and a prisoner; and when the Soul, like *Mercury*, would soar aloft, there is a *leaden ball* of *Self* which keeps it down; but he that

lives above himself, and denyes his private Interest, he throwes off the chains of his bondage; *Salutat se custodiæ, et cœlo restituitur*; he lives in an higher and more publick Region, and, like the Sun, casts his influence beyond his own *Orbe*; And makes the publick to rejoyce both in his light and heat. And so I have done with the next expression, *Do justly*, and *love mercy*. I must now come to the last,

Sen.

To *walk humbly with thy God*.

צנע *Agere humiliter et submissè*, as the word imports; or humble thy self to *walk with God*; or *agere promptè ac sollicitè*, so *Hieron.* renders the words. And so the Septuag. καὶ ἕτοιμον εἶναι τοῦ πορεύεσθαι μετὰ τοῦ θεοῦ σου. To be prompt and ready *to walk with God*. *Humilis in timore Dei*, the *Chald. Paraphr.* The expression speaks the true *holiness* of a Christians heart and life; A faithful, humble approving himself to God, in a Gospel-Conversation, in all piety and true goodness.

Now this last clause in my Text must carry us higher, and lead us to a more rais'd and spiritual discourse, then the former words were capable of. And there are two things to be considered. 1. There is the *principle* or *habit* of divine Grace; this is first implyed. And then, 2. The *act* and *exercise* of this grace, more clearly expresst, *To walk humbly with thy God*. The first is, to *be good*; the second is, to *do good*. The first is, to be *gracious*; the second is, to *exercise grace*. The one is, to be *in God*, and *with God*; the other is, to *walk with God*. The first is necessarily presupposed, and I shall a little speak to it; And first, in reference to those two former eminent *acts of Religion*, to *do justly, and love mercy*.

1. This Divine *grace, holiness*, and *goodness*, puts a *true excellency, beauty*, and *lustre* upon the two former duties of *Justice* and *Mercy*. The beams of grace do, as it were, gild the other acts, and make them *good* and *beautiful* indeed; they are not now *splendida peccata*, but *splendida virtutis opera*, they are truly divine and *splendid fruits of grace*.

2. This *Grace* and *holiness*, (in and through Christ) drawes

drawes down a ſpecial *acceptation* upon the other, of *Juſtice* and *Mercy*. *Righteouſneſs* and *holineſs* together makes up the moſt goodly *ſacrifice*. He that will offer an *acceptable* ſervice, muſt offer a *gratious* ſervice. A *cup of cold water* ſweetned with grace, and preſented with the hand of true goodneſs, is more highly pleaſing to the *King* of Heaven, then the ſame grateful Preſent was once to the *Perſian Monarch*, from a loving ſubject. A *Dove* and young *Pidgeon* muſt needs be welcome, if *covered with feathers of this yellow gold*. I queſtion not, but in a true ſenſe, the natural and barely moral actions of men are acceptable to God; where ever there is any kind of goodneſs, there is a *general approbation* from God. And truly, I am often ready to wiſh, There were more *encouraging Titles* put upon thoſe excellent acts of *Morality*, then we too often meet with. There is, I ſay, of theſe a *general* acceptance; but there is a *ſpecial* acceptance of the ſervices and actings of good men; A *ſupernatural*, *fatherly*, *ſaving* acceptanee.

1. Theſe flow from an *accepted perſon*, one *juſtified by the blood of Chriſt*. 2. They are preſented by an *accepted Son*, one in whom the Father is pleaſed, and *well pleaſed*. 3. They are ſtreams from a *purified ſoul*, purified by *faith*, inflamed with *love*, beautified with the divine *Image*, reſtored to, and made *partaker of*, *a divine nature*. 4. They are the iſſues of *ſincere Intentions*, which a divine all-ſeeing, and ſoul-piercing eye reads as clearly, as if they were written with *Capital letters* upon our breaſts. When actions of righteouſneſſe and mercy flow like warm bloud from the heart of a good man, Oh how heartily will God himſelf feed upon ſuch an offering! The *fire* of divine *Love* from Heaven ſhall conſume this ſacrifice, like that *fire* of old, which was *ſymbolum acceptationis*, the proper ſymbol of Divine acceptance. This is that obedientiall ſacrifice which God is more taken with, then with thouſands of Rams.

Obedientiâ mactatur propria Voluntas, in victimâ Caro aliena. Greg.

3. This

3. This divine *goodness* and *holiness*, it puts a *spirituality* upon all our actions of *righteousness* and *mercy*; it turns *moral vertues* into *spiritual graces*: it makes spiritual from the *Principles*, the *Manner*, the *End*, all which are truly divine, and noble, and *supernatural*. But I shall leave this Consideration, And close more neerly with the expression it self, as it lyes in my Text, which speaks properly a Christians exercise of true grace and goodness, *To walk humbly with thy God*. And two things here: 1. *To walk with God*. 2. *To walk humbly*.

To walk with God. That is,

1 Joh. 1. 3. 1. *To live in Communion and fellowship with God. Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.* Here is society indeed, worthy of our heaven-born souls. We make account, that choise society is one of our greatest comforts of life: here is the choisest in the World; it is not *fellowship* with *Saints* onely, no nor *Angels*, (though some tell us of a secret converse and communion between Angels and good men) but it is with the *Father* of light and glory, and his *Son* Jesus Christ. O the happy discoveries, the pretious Communications of God to his people, while they thus walk together. And where do they chiefly Cantic. 7. 9. walk? It is in the *Galleries*; they converse together in his *ordinances*, there God is pleas'd to unbosome himself, to open the very secrets of his heart, *The secrets of the Lord are with them that fear him*. He discovers the glorious designs of his grace and love, conveys the *riches*, and the *exceeding riches* of his infinite goodness and Mercy. It is not so much an *ordinance*, as meeting with God, and Communion with him in that Ordinance, which is our joy, and priviledge. Then shall we find the beams of his divine glory spreading themselves upon our souls; then shall the *name* of our Luck. 48. ordinances be, *The Lord is there*. Then shall we find his presence, enlivening, inlarging, quickening our souls; then shall we taste the sweetness of our Ordinances, and feed upon

upon the marrow and fatnesse of them. If God walk not there, and we with him, there is no chear stirring, no sweetnesse, no refreshment, no repast for souls. But if we walk together, we shall *sup together*, and God himself, and the enjoyment of him will be our *feast*. As that Divine Poet elegantly expresseth it;

Come ye hither all, whose taste
is your waste,
Save your cost, and mend your fare,
God is here prepar'd and dresst,
And the feast,
God, in whom all dainties are. Herb. po.

2. *To walk with God*, it is *to live in compliance with God, and with his mind*; It speaks our *ingenuous service, obedience*, and *conformity* to God. Thus to *walk* with God, it is to walk in the wayes, and Commands of God: he who *walks* in the paths of obedience, shall be sure to meet *God*, and they shall *walk* together. *That man walks most closely with God, that keeps most close to the Commands of God.* Thus *Enoch walked with God, and he had this testimony, That he pleased God.*

God is best *pleas'd*, when he is best *serv'd*; And he is best serv'd, when he is most heartily *obeyed*. This is certain, We shall never *walk* with him in a *way of Communion*, till we *walk* with him in a way of *Conformity*. *If we say, that we* 1 Joh. 1. 6. *have fellowship with him, and walk in darknesse, we lie, and do not the truth.* To *walk* in *Sin*, it is to walk *from* God. To walk in *obedience*, is to walk *with* God. Then this must be considered, Walking, it is a *voluntary motion*; our *obedience* must be *free* and *voluntary*, upon *choice*. A good man is acted by a free *Gospel* noble spirit, and he walks *chearfully* with God. Give him but the *cloud* and *pillar of Gods presence*, and though God carry him into thousands of *difficulties*, yet he will walk with him whersoever he goes; *He will serve him with a perfect heart, and a willing mind.* Such 1 Chr. 28. 9. a one

a one is full of *worthy thoughts* of God, and of Religion; he makes account he never acts *worthy of himself*, but when
Colos. 1. 10. *he walks worthy of God.* Such a one hath high *apprehensions* of the *excellencies*, and *glories*, and infinite *rewards* which attend the exercise of true *piety*, and *goodness*. And there-
Phil. 3. 14. 1 Cor. 15. 58. fore it is, *he presseth forward, towards the Mark.* Therefore *he is steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that his labour is not in vain in the Lord.* The truth is, God is highly pleas'd with such *free*, *hearty*, and *ingenuous* services. *Goodness* it self is such an ingenuous thing, as that it cannot but love all appearances of *ingenuity* wheresoever it is. I remember, it is said of *Luther*, (and he was one who acted *worthily*, and *walked with God*) *Vir iste potuit quod voluit*; That Man could have what he would of God. And I have read somewhere, That when he prayed for the recovery of a special friend, and a useful man, he cryed out, *Fiat voluntas mea Domine*, Lord, let *my will* be done; but then he comes off with this, *Mea Domine, quia Tua*, *Mine*, because thy *will is my will.* There was his ingenuous *Compliance* with God. And this is to *walk with God.*

3. To *walk with God*, it is to *walk above*, and *live in Heaven*; to have our *hearts and our choicest affections there with God, while we are here in the world.*

When our spiritualiz'd and raised *thoughts*, like *Spyes in the holy Land*, have brought us news of the admirable pleasantnesse, glory, and excellency which is above; Then, to send up our *affections*, our *love*, our *desires*, our *joyes*, to take seisin, and possession of those pleasant *Walks* and *Mansions*, which we our selves shall shortly come to, and fully enjoy; then with a holy disdain to trample upon the pleasures, the profits and interests of the world, and to think our selves a thousand times more *happy*, *great*, and *rich* in the *company* of God, and the enjoyment of him, to cry out with *David*, *Whom have I in heaven but thee? And there is none upon Earth that I desire besides thee.* This is to *walk*

with

with God. It is a most excellent resolution, that of the *Prophet*, *Though the fig-tree shall not blossom, &c. yet will I rejoyce in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation.* And that which I mention it for, is the next expression, *The Lord God is my strength, and he will make my feet like Hinds feet, and he will make me to walk upon mine high places.* Like *Hinds feet*; it is the nature of those creatures to forsake the Plains, and to climb up to the top of the Mountains. God shall make me to ascend to him, to have the *feet of my affections in Heaven*, that *Mountain* of divine glory; there to live, and feed, and *walk* with himself, the *God* of glory. Habbak. 3. 17, 18.

4. To *walk with God*, it is in the *Apostle's sense*, *to have our conversation above*, as well as our *affections*, τὸ πολίτευμα, that is the word, and speaks what I mean, our *society* our *polity*, our *trade* and *traffick*; to *walk*, as I may say, in that *Royal-Exchange*, and converse & trade with the *King of Heaven*, for no lesse then *Crowns* and *Kingdoms*, which are immortal, eternal, and everlasting. This is *to walk with God.*

I must add the second, To walk, and walk *humbly*: *To walk humbly with thy God.*

Humility seems the *lowest* grace, and yet it makes a Christian *highest*: highest in *divine favour*, highest in *real worth*, and true *nobleness* of mind; a mind best *fill'd*, but least *swell'd*: This is a grace which seems *black* and *duskish*, and of a *dark* countenance, but yet carries in it a speciall kind of *beauty* and *comelinesse*. *He walks most graciously, who walks most humbly.* And indeed, a good man who walks with God, sees all the reason in the world to *walk humbly.*

1. He is neer to God, and is often taking a view of God, and then reflects upon himself, and *understands the shortness, vanity*, and *imperfection of his own being.* He must needs consider what *himself* is, a worthless thing, compar'd with that *large, immense*, and *eternal Being.* Can a little drop pride it self before the Ocean? or a little beam glory in its light, before the Sun it self? The *Angels* themselves

must draw in their glory, before this *Majesty* of Heaven; and *be content to be charged with folly*: though not folly *morall*, yet folly *natural*; their perfection is but mutable, their nature changeable, and, compar'd with God, they are but *vain* and *imperfect beeings*. How much more should Man understand the *narrowness* and imperfection of his own? And he who walks with God doth so, and therefore *walks humbly*.

2. He who walks with God, understands the *deformity*, and *impurity of his own being*. To look upon that spotlesse, matchlesse, and infinitely glorious pattern of *purity* and *excellency*, *God* himself, that *eternall Sun* of beauty, and to be incircled with the pure beams of his divine holinesse; O what deformity, and pollution, must we needs then behold in our selves? *Behold he putteth no trust in his Saints;* Joh. 15. 15, 16. *and the heavens are not clean in his sight, how much more abominable and filthy is man, which drinketh iniquity like water?* And that of the Prophet is more remarkable to our purpose, Isa. 6. 1, 2, 3, 5. *I saw the Lord sitting upon a Throne, high, and lifted up and his train filled the Temple. Above it stood the Seraphims,* &c. *And one cryed unto another and said, Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord of Hosts, the whole Earth is full of his glory. Then said I, Wo is me, for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips, for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts.* The same beams of light which discover to us the excellency and *purity* of God, will shew us our own *pravity* and impurity. And therefore a good man *walks humbly*.

3. *A good man walks humbly.* 1. *Because he can walk no better.* 2. *Because he can walk so well.* A Christian hath reason to be humble under *Grace received*, as *under Sin committed*; he must be humble because *his Grace is from another*, and humble because *his Sins are from himself*.

But how walk humbly? especially because he can walk so well?

1. Such a one will constantly *own God and admire him in all his gifts and graces*. 2. He

313426

2. He will live *in an holy and humble returne to God*; he cries out with *David*; *What shall I render unto the Lord?* Psal. 116. and when he doth any thing *worthily*, he will say, *It is not I but the Grace of God which dwelleth in me.* And, *by the Grace of God, I am what I am.*

And so I have done with the last part of my Text, *To walk humbly with thy God.* I shall close all with this short Application. And it is, heartily to perswade every one *to the pursuit and exercise of this divine grace, holinesse, and goodnesse.* *Use.*

And shall I use these few Arguments?

1. Would we live in the *sight and Vision of God*, would we behold the *beauty of the Lord*, then *walk holily. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. O Beata visio, videre Deum in seipso, videre Deum in nobis.* O it is a blessed Vision indeed, to see God in *himself*, to see God *in us.* Here is a speciall advantage above all other sight and Knowledge whatsoever. For *God who commanded the light to shine out of darkenesse, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ.* Matth. 5. 8. *Bern.* *Qui creavit nos creatur in nobis.* Bern. 2 Cor. 4. 6.

2. Would we make our selves truely *High, Great*, and *Honourable*, then *walk holily.* I make account that Righteousnesse, viz. *Justice* and *Mercy* puts an high *value, worth*, and *dignity* upon those who possesse them; but this is nothing to what *Grace* doth. This, in its own nature, is that which is *reforming, rectifying, restoring* the Soul into its *primæve beauty, perfection*, and *excellency*, and not onely so, but it will by little and little at last make it far more glorious, then what it was in its *pure robes of innocency.* Adam *in all his glory was not cloathed like one of these.* Here is the white Robe of holinesse, and the garment of Salvation, *which the King himself useth to wear.* And a Christian cloathed with these, God himself doth highly honour. It is an admirable place that of the Prophet. *Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee.* What expressions are there for the great Majesty of Heaven to Isa. 43. 4.

Arist. use to Creatures? And if *Honor* be in *Honorante*, if honour be in him that honoureth, *&c.* how great must the honour be of those, whom the *King of Kings delights to honour*? such as these are the most preferred men in the World; they live under the rayes of *divine glory*, they are made bright and shining with the blessed beams of light and Grace, and walk and live under the smiles of eternall beauty.

3. Would we *be like God*, and *live the life of God*, *and be made partakers of his divine nature*, then be holy. *we all with open face beholding, as in a glasse, the Glory of the Lord,* 2 Cor. 3. 18. *are changed into the same Image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.* What *Hierocles* saith of *Philosophy*, I am sure it is more true of Grace and *Holinesse*, that it doth θεὸν ποιῆσαι ἐν τῷ δυνατὸν κατὰ τὸ δυνατὸν, it doth as much as is possible turn a man into God himself, that is, (as he means) into a *God-like nature*; we are not *deified*, but yet we are made *divine*, by grace and holinesse; it is of a *Transforming* nature.

4. Would we truly *enjoy our selves*, and *advance our real peace and comforts*, then walk holily; get Grace, and act grace. *The work of righteousnesse shall be peace*, and *the effect of righteousnesse quietnesse, and assurance for ever.* Sin indeed is an *evil*, and *bitter* thing, *The gall of Asps is within it*; but grace is pleasant, and full of sweetnesse; it brings in the true hearts-ease, contentment, and satisfaction. *As for me I will behold thy face in righteousnesse, I shall be satisfied when I awake, with thy likenesse.* What is said of *wisdome*, is true of Grace which is our great wisdom, *All her paths are paths of pleasure, and all her wayes are peace.* And what these pleasures of a good man are, they cannot be expressed. Who can limn out the sweetnesse of a Rose? The *Apostle* tells us of a *Joy which is unspeakable and full of glory*, in *believing*: this is the *hidden Manna, Angels food, waters of life running from the Throne of God, and of the Lamb*, here is the entertainment of Heaven, even *Heaven it self descended into the Soul.*

Is. 32. 17. Job 20. 14. Ps. 17. 15. Prov. Rev. 22. 1.

And

And here it would be worth the while, to shew how the peace and comfort of a Christian do arise from Grace, and true goodnesse.

Some will by no means allow such Doctrine, they will fetch all their comforts from *grace, without them*, and not from Grace *within them*; from Christ without them, and not from Christ within them. But certainly the Apostle tells us; It is not *who shall ascend up to Heaven?* it is not so much to look *above* us, as to look *within* us. The best way to read the *Love of God to us*, is to read *his love in us*. They will tell us, Because we cannot read the secret characters of God in the Book of Heaven, therefore wait for some secret and extraordinary voice from the *Spirit* of God, to secure our Salvation to us, and to fill us with *peace* and *joy*. But sure I am, the Scripture tells us another way. *There is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus*; And who are they? *who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. Let no man deceive you, he that doth righteousness is righteous.* And by this ye shall know, *That ye are passed from death to life, if ye love the brethren.* Rom. 10. Rom. 8. 1. 1 Joh. 3. 7.

The Apostle indeed tells us, in that 8th of the *Romans*, of the *witnesse of the Spirit, That we are the sons of God*: but it is clear, that the *Apostle* beats upon sanctification all along, vers. 2. *For the Law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the Law of sin and death.* And so he goes on to the 16th verse, and then tells us, that *the Spirit it self beareth witnesse with our spirits, that we are the children of God.* But is not this by the Spirit's *inlightning*, and *enlarging* our Souls, *shining upon* our *graces*, increasing them, and *separating* them from the mixture of sin and corruption, and then *raising* to a more *divine life?* And from thence it is, that the Soul is now fill'd with peace and sweetnesse; it finds, that *everlasting goodness* is seated within it self: And it cannot think of this, or enjoy this divine and eternal goodnesse, but it must needs be fill'd with blessed *delight*, and *joy in the Lord*. And what ever else may be said concerning

corning the *Spirit's witnesse* in an higher way, without reflecting upon our *graces*. How he may discover Himself to a Soul, and draw it into his own *bosome*, to suck of the *breasts* of Consolation, I have no time now to examine; It deserves a longer discourse. Yet these few words I must say, That whatever discovery or manifestation we make account of from God, must be brought to the sure light of the divine Word, and the working of an holy Spirit within us. Which considered, we might in short decide the businesse; but I shall onely say this more at present, That all the *voices* from Heaven cannot secure us, that our *sins are pardon'd*, and that we are the *sons of God*, and we shall be saved, till *salvation is first wrought within us*. The *witnessing-Spirit* must be first a *grace-working Spirit*. The Spirit cannot seal, before it works; cannot *witness to grace*, before it hath *imprinted grace*. The *saving* and *comforting* Spirit, must be first a *sanctifying* Spirit; till then, we do but flatter our selves, and fancy abundance of *joy* and *peace*; we do but court the *picture*, instead of a *living* joy. The sure way to maintain *peace*, and advance *comfort*, it is to advance *Grace* and *goodnesse*. *The fruit of righteousnesse is sown in peace.* Jam. 3. 18.

5. Would we at last *sit down with God in glory*. *Then walk with God by grace*: What ever weary step we may find here, we shall at last *sit together in heavenly places with Christ*, and sit upon *Thrones* of glory, there not onely rest our selves, but shall rejoyce and triumph after all our Labours, and difficulties. It is but *walking a while with God*, And then he will bring us into his Presence-Chamber, and set us down like *Coranus* his guests, which *Athæneus* makes mention of at a *Nuptial solemnity*: they were brought in to the festivals with a *Crown* of gold upon their heads, which was given to every one of them; onely here is the difference; instead of gold, here shall be a Crown of *glory*, which the *righteous and holy God* shall give to all those who have liv'd *righteously* and *holily*. And then, as the *Apostle* saith

313421

faith, *we shall be for ever with the Lord.* The *Ancients* use to write at the Funerals of any one, *Sit anima ejus, in fasciculo vitæ, cum cæteris justis, Amen, Amen; Selah:* Let his Soul be bound up in the bundle of life, with the rest of just men, &c. But the *Apostle* speaks higher here, Our Souls shall not onely be bound up in the bundle of life with just men; we shall not onely be with the *innumerable company of Saints and Angels, and just men made perfect; but then shall we be for ever with the Lord.* We shall after we have walked together, sit down together, rejoyce together in eternity. This shall be the portion of all his Saints. And for this end hath *he shewed thee, O man, what is good, and what the Lord requireth of thee, to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God.*

1 Thes. 4. 17.

Heb. 12. 22.

FINIS.